

Oct 2, 1925

I went to Shanghai, leaving Grace at Hankow, and bought some winter supplies.

We had a normal and uneventful trip from Yunko to Tschowfu.

Wierling was very busy, having lost one Chinese doctor (Dr. Wu) soon after I left. Now I am busy for Wierling has gone to bring his folks home; a two weeks job. However, Dr. Chen will be back from Peking

in four or five days and then things will be more normal again.

Goulter wrote a detailed account of the summer experience that he and his wife + Grace had. It is very interesting, really exciting, and quite long. He gave us a copy. I will make another for you when I get time.

P.S. - Those things you are wondering about is a Chinese writing set. Think of it as the little black stick with characters on it.

They spit on the slab which you called a green stone + then rub the end of the ink stick on it till they have thick ink. Then they use the little brush to write with holding it straight up and down -

Douglas

LUCHOWFU CHRISTIAN HOSPITAL

HOFEI

ANWHEI

CHINA

*My last letter to Dad
before he died*

October 15th, 1925.

Dear Dad,

Your sleepy letter came today, twenty-three days on the way, signed "Your Son, Wm Corpron." It sounded rather strange. I hope it will be the correct closing about twenty years and four months from now.

We are well, want to stay in China as long as we are useful and wanted, getting fine experience of many varieties, and get a bit more than plenty of real excitement. Grace is as happy as a clam now that she is home and running her own house and making gardens and watching her flowers grow. She doesn't worry about all of the things she could worry about if she wanted to; she lets me do that. I'm not getting thin over it but the responsibilities of a full hospital, which could be twice as full if we had the room, and of a too large a daily clinic I have no time to play now that Dr. Vierling and Dr. Chen are still away. Other things come up every week to make one's life as exciting as a walk down an American auto infested street. Viz. The coolie who went with me this summer I laid off upon our return because he was useless and a troublemaker. He threatened to raise a mob to attack me because he claimed I still owed him money which I refused to pay. He had the date set for my exit from church one Sunday morning. Chinese friends warned me not to go to church that day. I went and waited for things to happen; but all was quiet. His blackmail stunt had failed.

A little later it became my duty as acting Superintendent to discharge two hospital servants who were gambling so late nights they couldn't do their work the next days. It took me one whole afternoon to fire them. One knocked the bottoms out of all the hot water boilers he had been caring for and poured kerosene on the water he had carried for the same. The other returned and tore the clothes off of the gateman who had orders not to let them in. You say, "Well, why didn't you call the police?" I didn't report it to the police for they are powerless. I could do more singlehanded than the whole police force; and that's the truth. Nor did I report it to the Yamen. Protection there is almost a negative quantity. There are about a hundred soldiers in town, and they are at the point of riot all the time. Really God is our only protection from dangers. I gave the chief of the Theaves Guild, who reported to see of what assistance he could be, two hundred coppers to see that the trouble makers didn't return; but one did once.

The next week the soldiers were due to riot. They had been mistreated by the head man here. He beheaded two and hadn't paid them for a long time. So they were going to raise trouble and incidentally money and were intending, so the report went, to carry off some of the foreigners as hostages so they wouldn't be followed too hotly. One night I got a note from the postmaster, who writes English, asking if his wife could stay in the hospital over night for the riot was coming off that night. But it didn't come off. Nor has it occurred yet. But that was something to think about while the scare lasted.

Lichowfu Anhwei
October 15, 1926

My dear Mae.

Congratulations on your Billy Roy.

I can wish you no more than that he is as big a joy to you as is our small son and heir to me. Nothing much sweeter than kiddies.

We are sending you a small box today - In it is a pair of little red shoes - tiger shoes which Chinese babies wear for dress up occasions. Also there is a silver chain and lock which a Chinese boy baby wears around his neck and plays with as soon as he can use his hands. My Billie had three like it given him and some bracelets with bangles. He is just getting to the stage now where he can have lots of fun with them.

I have an unusually good group of servants this fall and so I have more time for loving my kiddies. If I had to do all my own work it might be a different story. I am doing quite a bit of bossing tho and the fairly part of cooking this year. Its wonderful to be well enough to do it. I hate to think of the miserable weeks I put in last spring flat on my back and not knowing what was happening to my kiddies or how clean the kitchen was. I feel so much better now that it all seems like a bad dream - I tell Doug that I feel as tho I had come back from the dead - and I guess I did almost. We live an easy life out here but are constantly

in danger from these tropical diseases.

Doug was telling me in his letter how Phyllis Ann is going to kindergarten. She just loves it, can hardly sit still to eat her breakfast she is so eager to be off. She is gone four hours and thus I have a wonderfully free forenoon. Perhaps I can really study and write letters once again. I have not been able to do it at all this summer for Phyllis was constantly at my elbow asking questions or getting into mischief. You know how it is - I have lost track of a good many of my friends just because I have been too sick and tied down with babies to even write a proper letter of thanks. Then too I was almost blind for a long time the early part of the summer. It sounds like a miracle and it was. I believe it was the prayers of our Chinese Christians that helped me to get well. My eyes are perfectly normal again now. I can knit & sew as well as ever.

I wonder if your Sonny boy will look like his grandpa too. Ours is every bit as corpulent. Big brown eyes and round flat nose. His hair is sort of reddish now, what there is of it but it will change just as Phyllis did. Hers is yellow now but is rapidly getting darker.

Have you succeeded in teaching Marjory Ann table manners? I despair at the task. Seems as tho I have made no impression at all and we spend half our meal in correcting Phyllis. She will slobber and take too much and fool around and let her food get cold, unless I am continually keeping her up to it. Please comfort my soul and tell me your child does the same thing. I'll write the rest in mother's letter home
grace

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安基
徽督
合醫
肥院

Oct. 20th, 1925.

Dearest mother,

I was in the hospital office when the telegram came telling of pappa's illness. It had only been about a week since I had received a letter from him and I had answered it at once. I took it from that letter that he was well, happy, and working at the usual satisfactory pace. So the cablegram of his illness took me completely off of my feet. I thought, as soon as I could collect my thoughts, that I should pack a bag and leave for home at once. But then it dawned upon me that I couldn't take Grace and Phyllis Ann, nor could I leave them behind in the uncertainty of this place. Then I realized that I couldn't do anything to help him get better any more than was already being done even if I could get on an aeroplane and get there the next day. But it would be at best three ~~we~~ weeks and by that time pappa would be well on the road to recovery or it would be too late. So I had to cable my inability to come; and am anxiously waiting for more encouraging news. I have been dreaming about him every night. He has been sick in these dreams but gradually recovering. So I am waiting for that news.

My cablegram, replying to your cable, was in code sent to the U.C.M.S. office, where it was to be deciphered and forwarded to you by wire. It was as follows:-

GO STLOUISMO

XIXOKWYOSF UFSILILCAR IXCASJIOZL MERPHOAFYF

The translation is:--U.C.M.S.? 1st Louis, Mo, Please telegraph following to my mother---deeply grieved to hear the sad news; accept sincere sympathy---Regret my inability to come---on account of family affairs.---We hope---improving steadily.---Love---Dr. Corpron.

There is another war in and around Shanghai and Vierling is on his way home, passing thru there. I don't know when he will get here. So I am still here with a hospital on my hands.

We are now beginning to really realize what it means to be a missionary. Since our summer experiences and now pappa's illness and our inability to come to him, has made us realize as we have not had to before that there are sacrifices to be made.

I am hoping and praying almost continually that recovery is now well on the way. But I also hope he will take it easy from now on and not try to make next year the greatest year in practice as last year was. We need him more than he needs the money.

I am anxiously awaiting further word.

Love,

Douglas

Luckrofs, Anhuwa -
Dec - 20, 1925 -

Dear Florence Ann -

Just got your letter written a month ago on the eve of Community Day. You were living in dread of the morrow and hated the whole world in general. Seems to me you get more than your share of this not feeling business - Guess I was luckier than I know. It must be a fright of a job. Your school system is so progressive and community minded that you can't escape it I suppose.

You speak of not having a letter from me in two months and not knowing whether I was home or not. I wrote my first letter to Biwabik in Haichow and I am sure I wrote soon after getting home here the last of Sept. There must have been a letter lost. I have been home safe + happy for almost three months now. This long distance correspondence surely is a drag tho. Its like I used to tell Doug when we had not seen each other for a year + he was East + I was West. The lines of communication are down and we can not write as we used to. I get so lonesome for you + Sallie - There is no one here who can anywhere near fill your shoes. I have only three married women to choose from this year two of them are swamped with kids. That only leaves Mrs. Goultier. to choose to - I learned how fine she was last summer - but now she lives a twenty minute walk away + is busy teaching in the girls

school as well as trying to run her household -
I have been shut in this last week. haven't seen a soul
except the other Dr. + nurse who pick in once a day to see how
we are getting on. Doug picked up a mild case of diphtheria last
mon. at his clinic I spoke. Anyhow he had a bad patch in his
throat + a fever for several days - we all took anti-toxin and
he was well by Thurs. + we can be almost sure that
I won't get it. But its been lonesome of course. Couldn't
even charm with Doug since he isolated himself
as much as possible. He hopes to get three negative
cultures before Christmas - I surely hope he does and that
none of the servants get it.

I don't blame you any for wanting an Edison.
Our machine fills in a huge blank in our lives
& I don't know what we'd ever do without it. We
have only three Christmas records and I have been playing
them to death these shut in days - I am thinking of
sending over and borrowing some of the neighbor's Christmas
records for a day. This is the week when they mean the most.
Our machine plays Edison as well as Victor. I love the
Edison ones we have of Rachmaninoff at the piano.
They cost twice as much as the others but are worth
it. They are perfect. and of such high quality that
one never tires of them. The Edison also reproduces
the cornet especially well. You love the violin as much.
you can't get the most famous artists like Kreisler + Elman
but I spoke there are others not so famous that are good.
We have decided always to buy the very best records we
can get for we find we never tire of them as we do
of a cheap jazz one that costs 50¢ or so. Gullies have a
small phonograph and some thirty low class Uncle Josh
etc records that a small church in Okla sent them -

but I seldom play it. Irene can make better music herself.
Well - so much for that. Here's my topic sentence at the bottom
of my paragraph - "one excellent \$3.00 record is to be preferred to six
medium ones." But I don't need to tell you all this.
I remember how you have always showed such good
taste in the kind you preferred and how you always
grabbed for the ones with the unpronounceable names -
your new dress sounds lovely. It's the same kind of
cloth I made my Soph. wooden dress of. I just used the
skirt of mine up last year + made a play coat for Nub.
You don't have anything on me when it comes to a
change of clothes. I have to wear wooden dresses now
and I am reduced to one thing that will go around me.
+ it's not beautiful. I had the tailor remake my blue serge.
I made my 1st year Keaching + have worn off + on ever since.
I got some tannish grey flannel and added a front and
collar + cuffs. Spelt the blue down the front so that it
flops bolero effect. Is very comfortable + looks like a
picture I saw in the Pictorial. Or rather it would look
that way if I had a normal shape. It's the first time I
have found a way to make over these lowish (but not
low enough) waist lines. I am going to try my brown
gabardine that way after Billie (?) comes. I saw a
beautiful piece of brown grape pattern silk that I think will
go with it beautifully. These Chinese silks are good enough to eat.
I wish I needed a silk dress. But I still have three
none of which are worn out. We don't dress up enough
out here to wear such a thing out.

We have to wear sweaters over them if we wear them in the winter at all - You speak of sending me a sweater - I hope it will stretch over my silk maternity dress & then I'd have something new for a dress up outfit. Its upstairs now in one of mother's boxes and we have only three more days to wait - Isn't Christmas fun? We have five pkgs put away up stairs & Doug's folks aren't here yet. Doug did his Christmas shopping last year when he was in Shanghai. He has a locked trunk upstairs that he won't let me get into. Also I stumbled onto a screaming pair of goldish tan silk stockings that he had put in one of his drawers & not covered up securely enough. I did not have any chance to shop for him so I had Lallie send out chocolates & a belt & garters etc. and the tailor is making him a lovely wool shirt & some ties. Doug walked in on me too early & walked thru the room where the tailor was working ^{yesterday}. He didn't say anything but I have a sad fear he saw his shirt.

Nuts is the one that its really fun getting ready for. It has been such fun this year. Really - the preparations are over half the joy. Doug got her blocks & dishes and a slate etc in Shanghai and he is having our nice old carpenter make her a cute little two wheeled cart that she can push her dollies in out on the side walk. I also had the carpenter make a lovely big doll bed - Big enough to put at least three dolls in. Its just like Nuts own bed only tiny - painted white. The tailor made it a nice mattress and sheets & pillow cases and quilts. It will just keep her busy for hours I know. And the outfit was so much easier to get here than it would have been in America & cheaper too.

Lallie sent her the dinkiest little "Bye Low" dollie - Its four

is exactly like a two weeks old baby and My! how he can cry! In fact he cried all the way from America to China. When my cooie dumped the box down on the table + I turned it over to look at the address - it let out a wail and I knew at once what was in it - So I opened it up + sneaked out the baby for I wanted the fun of making clothes for him, and its been such a joy. Last night I hemmed tiny diapers + made booties and shirts and a little white dress. Today the tailor is making a brown fuzzy bag with pointed ~~bottom~~ ^{bottom}. And tonight I'll see if I can manage a flannel petticoat and sash of some kind. I can just see Phyllis sitting down + dressing him while I am bathing my baby. She can get on her own shoes + stockings now but cant lace the shoes yet, But she'll soon learn. I'd give a whole lot if Mother + Callie could see her Christmas morning. They'd get as big a kick out of it as we do.

Doug's mother has another grandchild I am happy to say. She is probably a big comfort to her now. Mother sounds as happy as a clam because she has Joe to fuss over. How I hope he will stay by her awhile and not go rushing off to Minn. right away. He'll do it eventually I suppose but he certainly hasn't money enough now.

I feel so sorry for Doug's mother. Poor soul, she is just lost. She is going to live with Mae + Roy, has enough to live on for the present at least. Her last letter said she did not want Doug to leave his chosen work now for she couldn't be happy if she had dragged him away. I wish she would go into some State missionary work. She needs a job. She is such a managing sort of a person that she

is in misery without an occupation. Doug + I are only just beginning to be worth anything to the Society that sent us out and they have invested thousands of dollars in us. We'd be grand sports to go back on them this early in the game - wouldn't we?

You talk about drawing on your life insurance to come west to see us when we are home. Save your money and make a grand summer trip of it. However, I am hoping we get East ourselves. Doug will of course want to study some more - he talks of going back to his old West Penn in Pittsburg. I can't imagine living without him the whole year. I have an idea we'll all go and I'll find some place out in the suburbs where my kids won't be run over by street cars and automobiles. I tremble to think of all those cars. Yet I sort of hope we can get a second hand Ford. There's a lot of folks in mind I'd like to see - You + Grace - + the Root folks and Uncle Ben etc - who says Joe + another won't be there then - and a car seems to be the only way of getting around the world in America. Oh! Well - a lot of things can happen in two years. Maybe you'll be teaching in Cal. like Lottie Carbert.

I am telling you I am only going to have two kids when I come home but maybe I better say it with hushed breath. Everybody here in Buchoufer seems to have more than they want. However I think Doug has a little more up to date information than most. I am glad he is my husband + not any body else. I just learned last night that Irene Goulet is pregnant again - Has been real sick for a week + probably will be from now on. That will spoil all their grand furlough plans of a trip thru Europe. Isn't another Nature mean the way she takes a fellow by the neck + makes you fulfill her aims? I love you
Well - I'll write again soon after Xmas - Grace

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October 26th, 1925.

Dearest Mother,

If all we had to do was the things someone had first worked out as best for us to do, considering all persons and things involved in that action, the doing would be nothing at all. The hardest thing is the deciding what that action must be. It took many a debate in my mind before I could get up courage enough to say the final word that decided my coming to China. After the word had been spoken, after the chance had been taken that that was the right course to take rather than some other, it was not so hard. Then things took their own course and went off quite smoothly.

Today I have had to make one of these very difficult decisions; perhaps the hardest of my life so far. Your cablegram came at noon---"Pappa died, please come." Knowing a little of the great emptiness which has so suddenly come into your life with pappa gone, and how you would want me, your other sweetheart and image of him, with you to comfort you, - every cell in my whole body went out to you and your call, "Please come." I wanted you as much as you wanted me, - to be your strong right arm thru this time of sorrow.

I had to answer, "Can't come." I fought all afternoon with the obstacles that made me answer thus; obstacles which on that side of the broad Pacific might not seem so great as they really are.

In the first place I knew that by the time I could get there you would have ~~been~~ already gone thru the first shock of keenest sorrow without me and the parting that would have to take place again in a week or two at the most would be very hard.

Again, I would have to finance my own trip, which is impossible now. This month we got only \$87.68 Mex. salary because my insurance and a Montgomery-Ward order came out of it. That is about used up to supply our table. The Mission is so hard up on their careful budget and coming school deficits (now that school enrollments are small due to the student trouble), so that if I did borrow by means of a sight draft it would have to be taken out of my next months salary, simply an advance of a month. In that case Grace would have nothing to live on the next two months for it will take all above actual food cost to cover coal bill this next month and the winter staple grocery bill, and the rent on the cottage last summer. I'd never think of you paying it, for you will need all of yours and pappa's savings in the future.

If I did come I would have to do it alone. There is no question about that. There would be no good reason for taking the risks entailed in dragging her and the baby and the little one to be across the rough winter Pacific and back. If she did get one way it would then be too late to come back before the confinement; and then no telling when she would be in shape for the return. And Vierlings are leaving for furlough next June and I have to learn all about the running of the hospital before that time. I could hardly think of leaving her out here in this bandit infested region either, to have her baby without me.

Now that pappa has been forced to take his rest from an

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I wonder if I should say these things at this time when you want me and I want you so badly to comfort each other over our great loss, - you your husband and lover, I my father, medical inspiration and pattern, and hum?

My best love and thoughts are with you and the girls at this time.

Love.

Douglas